

NEWS RELEASE

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

Commissioner Claire DeMatteis

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DOC announces one additional positive COVID-19 test result as it surpasses 1,000 daily proactive inmate temperature checks and 100 proactive inmate tests

*Comes amid suspension of Sussex County Work Release as further measure to
protect against spread of virus*

Dover, DE -- The Delaware Department of Correction (DOC) today announced one additional positive COVID-19 test result, as it surpasses 1,000 daily proactive inmate temperature checks. 136 total inmate COVID-19 tests have been conducted, including 100 proactive tests of asymptomatic inmates. 103 inmate tests have been returned as negative, with 12 pending and 21 positive results.

Additionally, the DOC today announced the countywide suspension of work release in Sussex County. Work release has been significantly reduced in other parts of the state, with only 14 offenders in New Castle County currently reporting to work release employers, and zero in Kent County. Work release participants are being restricted to employers in essential industries that employ the same strict screening and cleaning measures as the DOC.

Review an informational chart of positive COVID-19 cases among DOC employees, contracted staff and inmates for each DOC facility by [clicking HERE](#). The latest positive COVID-19 test result is as follows:

- **One inmate from the Sussex Community Corrections Center (SCCC) in Georgetown.** The inmate reported minor symptoms on Friday, April 17 and was immediately moved to isolation, where he received a COVID-19 test. When the positive test result was returned on Sunday, April 19 the inmate was transported to the James T. Vaughn Correctional Center COVID treatment center, where he continues to be monitored with no fever. This inmate was housed in proximity to [two SCCC inmates who tested positive for COVID-19 last week and seven other SCCC inmates who have been closely monitored in isolation and were proactively tested for COVID last week, returning positive test results for 3 asymptomatic inmates and 4 negative test results over the weekend](#). The 3 asymptomatic inmates with positive test results were transported to the James T.

Vaughn Correctional Center COVID treatment center and the 4 inmates with negative test results continue to be carefully monitored in isolation at SCCC.

This brings the total to 21 inmates statewide to test positive for the virus at just two DOC facilities, including 15 inmates from one minimum security housing unit at one prison facility (JTVCC) and 6 inmates from one housing area at one Community Corrections Center (SCCC). **Of the 21 inmates who have tested positive, only 6 are displaying symptoms as of this morning, with 1 being monitored in the JTVCC COVID treatment center, 1 receiving treatment in the JTVCC infirmary, and 4 receiving treatment at an area hospital in stable condition. None are on a ventilator.**

No additional information will be provided about the identity of the inmate for privacy protection.

"We are continuing to take aggressive precautions through round-the-clock monitoring within our facilities, continuous screening and cleaning operations, and daily temperature checks of more than 1,000 inmates. We have also conducted 136 COVID tests of our inmates to ensure that treatment is immediately provided where needed and to help contain the spread of COVID-19 in our correctional system," **Commissioner Claire DeMatteis said.**

The DOC is employing a variety of prevention, screening, cleaning and containment measures to guard against the spread of the novel coronavirus, including:

- All persons, including Officers, administrative staff and probationers who enter any Level V prison, Level IV violation of probation or work release center, or Probation and Parole Office are screened for COVID-19, including a series of questions and a forehead temperature check with a thermometer
- Staff who present with symptoms are sent home to self-quarantine and directed to contact their health care provider.
- Newly arriving inmates are held in isolation for the first 14 days, during which they are carefully monitored, including daily temperature checks with a thermometer.
- DOC has implemented extra daily cleaning of DOC facilities and is using specialized fogging machines to disinfect entire rooms of common areas, housing units and workspaces.
- Face masks are being worn by Correctional Officers and contract healthcare workers as a protection for inmates, Officers and other employees. **All Correctional Officers have been wearing face masks since April 10. Face masks have also been provided to more than 500 inmates who are in infirmaries, those with compromised immune systems, and certain inmates with institutional jobs, such as food service.**
- Most Probationer visits with Probation Officers were transitioned to phone check-ins in March to support social distancing measures.

In addition, the DOC has temporarily suspended in-person prison programming to reduce the movement of people into facilities and movement of groups of people within facilities. Certain programs, including treatment and education programs and religious programming, are being transitioned to a virtual video format. Inmates continue to have outside recreation

opportunities within their confined areas and continue to have access to phones to stay in regular contact with their loved ones. DOC is also expanding the use of electronic tablets among the inmate population, where available.

Get updated information about the DOC's response to COVID-19 and read previous announcements of positive COVID-19 cases by visiting <https://doc.delaware.gov>, and follow *decorrection* on Facebook and Twitter.

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